

## IN THIS ISSUE

**1 Core systems proposal**

by Donna Micklus

**2 Who wants to pay that invoice?**

by Heather Cavanaugh

**3 Kudos**

by Cindy Duberek

**4 Victories!**

by Mike Mansfield  
and John McKay

**5 Up Close with Bill Skyrme**

by Mike Mansfield

**6 Sexual harassment training**

by John McKay

**6 EmployABILITY**

by John McKay

**7 On the road again**

by John McKay

**7 Small Business Expo**

by Heather Cavanaugh

**8 Short stuff**

by Mike Mansfield  
and John McKay

## IT proposal unveiled

### New program outlines core systems integration

By Donna Micklus

Governor John G. Rowland, DAS Commissioner Barbara Waters, and State Comptroller Nancy Wyman, in a show of bipartisan support, held a joint press conference earlier this month to announce a new Core Systems project.

The project will, for the first time, integrate the state's basic financial and administrative functions, i.e., account-

**"I have tremendous confidence in state employees' capability of shepherding this program through."**

Governor John G. Rowland

ing, accounts payable, payroll, time and attendance, and personnel.

"We are all in agreement on the solution," the Governor said.

"I have tremendous confidence in state employees' capability of shepherding this program through," he emphasized.

Waters said she is excited at the prospect of partnering with the Comptroller's Office (OSC) and Depart-



**Governor John G. Rowland with Comptroller Nancy Wyman (l) and Commissioner Barbara Waters at Core Systems news conference.**

ment of Information Technology (DOIT) to provide better management information and streamline business processes.

Today, there are a number of separate systems that perform the state's financial and administrative functions. Wyman said that as a group they no longer meet the state's business needs, and while they may be Y2K compliant, are technologically obsolete.

A new single, enterprise-wide public sector software would replace these diverse systems.

Wyman said that Core Systems project can be implemented with an off-the-shelf Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software package, and estimated actual operation would take roughly two to three years. Costs are expected to run between \$60 million and \$75 million.

"I'm confident this program will make us more responsive to the people we are trying to serve," Governor Rowland concluded.

# This FSC event was a slam dunk By Heather Cavanaugh

**D**AS-1s, invoices, requisitions. Sound boring? Not with the FSC Business Office running the show.

On February 7 and 8, members from the Business Office team offered "info sessions" to acclimate new DAS employees and refresh the veterans.

Emcee V. Jean Michael introduced all team players at the "main event" where employees were announced one-by-one and ran into the room to slam-dunk documents Husky-style into the document removal bin.

Audience members cheered while welcoming their favorite cronies.

Once the crowd settled, areas of

the Business Office gave brief explanations of what they do, from Grants Management, which manages over 60 grants internally, to the Master Insurance Program that saves taxpayers over \$4 million annually for tenants of 95 local housing authorities.

Participants quickly learned that the Business Office is involved in most of the activities that take place in an average workday.

"It's best if you can get information to us as early on as possible so we can do our job and provide excellent customer service," said Michael.

The cast of players demonstrated possible scenarios and how to best resolve those issues.

These skits, coined "A Day in the Life of the Business Office," included comical spin-offs of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" and also displayed the acting talent of employees.

Most of all, they made learning fun.

"This was not at all a surprise, because I've always known that

this is a very talented group. But there is no question that the presentation was extremely innovative, fun, and most of all, informative. I'm really proud of my 'Prime-Time Players,'" said Jim McKenna.



High 5's reflect the team spirit of the FSC Business Office as Jean Michael introduces staff at the "Main Event."

Participants were also pleased with the turnout.

"Their creativity, coupled with the information given, made it not only informative but quite entertaining," said Donna

Wadhams of FSC-Newington.

Host of "Who Wants to Pay That Invoice"

Mike Felix said, "This high-spirited FSC Business

Office Overview was an exciting team effort made by employees to share valuable information with our customers in an entertaining manner. The many comments I've heard about our informational session have been rewarding."

The resounding mantra of the team was if you're in need of assistance, "What do you do? Call the business office."

They obviously meant it.



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Contributions are welcome but may be edited for space and clarity.

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Governor John G. Rowland commended **Mike Mansfield** for his valuable assistance and participation during the Y2K activation of the Emergency Operations Center and said, "The professionalism and dedication of the communications volunteers resulted in an extraordinarily well-run operation."

Devin Marquez applauded **Christopher Fons** for the exceptional job of training new employees Lilka Vega and Eva Williams. "They have been brought up-to-speed because of his training ability and in part because of their great work ethics."

Veterans' Affairs Commissioner Eugene A. Migliaro Jr. thanked **Steve Dygus** and the **Fleet Operations Staff** for the swift and efficient service provided in securing a state vehicle for his business use.

Commissioner Arthur J. Rocque Jr. of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) recognized **Cindy Milardo** for her assistance to DEP in securing a contract for their campground reservation system and said, "Our customers can look forward to a greatly improved service thanks to the efforts of Ms. Milardo."

Director John T. Wiltse from the Office of Emergency Management praised **Mike Mansfield** for his assistance during the Y2K emergency activation. "Your ability to gather information, prepare news releases, schedule and conduct interviews, and develop talking points – all with a professional attitude- was invaluable."

Commissioner T.R. Anson from the Department of Public Works commended **Larry King** and **Deanna Howard** for their most pleasant, professional, efficient, and expedient manner with a request for a last minute, time-sensitive printing job.

Kudos from Nancy Jones to the **Campaign for Charitable Giving Committee** for their hard work and commitment

in raising a total of \$16,484.55 and to all of the **DAS employees** for their participation and generosity.

Steven Warren from CT Transit thanked **Peter Smith** for their Audio Logging Recorder standardization transaction and said, "You really are a customer service person and your extra efforts and actions will result in an expense savings for the state."

Chris Roberts extended his appreciation to **Dan Donahue**, **Fred Ondevilla**, and **Kevin Backman** for providing maintenance coverage at FSC in Newington when needed. "You are a great group of people to work with."

Rhona J. Roffer from the Look Forward Program at Hartford College for Women commended **Phil Karas'** positive and uplifting presentation to the clients of the program and is looking forward to the cultivation of a mutually beneficial relationship with HRBC.

Special thanks to **Lina Simonu** from Carolyn St. Paul for inviting her to the HRBC retirement seminar. "I found it very informative and you did a great job explaining all of the information."

Commissioner Barbara Waters praised **Jim Passier** and the **Procurement Staff** for their quick response to Executive Director Larry Alibozek from Board of Education and Services for the Blind for providing an additional set-aside service to state agencies for miscellaneous promotional handout items. "Your dedication to customer service is unparalleled."

Director of Communications Bernard L. Kavalier from the Office of the State Treasurer expressed his appreciation to **Vickye Cotton** and **Larry King**



for the excellent report that was printed for their agency. "We appreciate your contributions to the success of this effort."

Carol Wilson applauded **Debbie Mitchell** for her innovative thinking in getting report data exported for easy conversion. "A big timesaver. Thanks Debbie!"

Special thanks to **Marilyn LaFontaine** from Doris Vieira for helping with the data entry of the Food Distribution Program's Customer Preference Survey. "With your assistance we were able to process the information for our School Lunch Advisory Council meeting on time."

Devin Marquez praised **Sonji Fonseca**, **Christopher Fons**, **Eva Williams**, **Barbara Jenec**, **Shirley Crowley**, **Laurence Goulart**, **William Hauschulz**, **Donna Golas**, and **Lilka Vega** for their great work on the Anthem Blue Cross Billing Project processing over 93 children with claims totaling over \$37,336.25.

## ***Putting a new face on government***

February marks an anniversary of sorts for the DAS Communications team. It's been exactly one year since the six-person staff - Director Donna Micklus, secretary Cindy Duberek, and writers/designers Heather Cavanaugh, Mike Mansfield, John McKay, and Nina Ritson - came together in their room 407 "studio," setting out to "change the face of state government."

Twelve months in, it appears they've made major inroads; DAS Communications now boasts a client



list of over 25 satisfied state agencies and quasi-governmental groups.

Their state-run, internal ad agency is the only one of its kind in the country. Their original goal was to simply save taxpayers' money by helping agencies hold on to some of the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent each year on outside communications services.

"Generally speaking, our clients have turned to us for two reasons," said Micklus. "One has always been that we offer a full range of communications services at prices the private sector just can't touch. The other reason is that the quality of our work is just as attractive as our rates."

DAS Communications is rapidly emerging as an affordable way for state agencies to produce high-quality material.

All the while, the Communications Office continues to handle DAS' own communication needs, including media inquiries, Freedom of Information requests, and internal communication for all the agency's business centers.

This means that the days can get hectic on the fourth floor. In fact, the group has just completed its most prolific period to date. Over the past eight weeks alone, in addition to turning out DAS publications like *Purchasing Power*, the new *E-Commerce*

*Extra* insert, *Nuts & Bolts*, *In Touch*, *CONNECTIONS*, an E-Commerce marketing brochure, and the monthly *DAS Times*, they've designed cover art for DOIT and Consumer Counsel, Office of Protection and Advocacy's *Disability Buzz* newsletter, a new manual for the Food Distribution Program, full color newsletters, brochures, and *Commissioner's Update* for DMR, the *DECD Agenda* and *The DECD Employee Edge*, CDA web pages, DPH's *House Call News*, a brochure for DOT, a full-color annual report for the Office of the Comptroller, booklets and inserts for DCF's Health Packet, Consumer Protection's newsletter, and a 56-page annual report for the Statewide Narcotics Taskforce.

Next up: a comprehensive communications plan for the Board of Education and Services for the Blind, more marketing brochures for DAS "e-partners" services, and programs and collateral for a Women's Health Care Summit hosted by Department of Public Health as well as that agency's new *AIDS Health Outlook* newsletter.

## ***Better bidding***

Why limit your town to just the newspaper?

In the past, Connecticut municipalities could only notify a contractor of their wants and needs via the local newspapers. That's all changed.

Now, with DAS' help, local towns and offices can post their bid information on the DAS website, reaching a much larger audience.

Through DAS' outreach to municipalities, vendors can establish their own accounts, add and modify their information, and list the proper contact name, e-mail, fax etc. Bid expiration dates can also be entered to remove bid notification once the due date for submission has passed.

"It's a great system," said DAS webmaster Bill Skyrme. "The customer has complete control over his or her own account, and can modify it any time he or she wants, to insure they get exactly what they're looking for."

Skyrme went on to say that except for some minor administrative oversight from DAS, the website generally maintains itself.

"It's a simple concept," said Skyrme, "the easier you make something for your customer, the more they're going to love it."

# Top Bill - ing at DAS

By Mike Mansfield

Films that DAS Webmaster Bill Skyrme has appeared in have grossed nearly \$1 billion worldwide in theatrical release.

No wonder Harrison Ford asked him to coffee on the movie set.

In addition to his DAS colleagues, Bill Skyrme can count such Hollywood heavyweights as Arnold

Schwarzenegger, Denzel Washington, and Clint Eastwood among the folks he's worked with.

Skyrme has "starred" in such blockbusters as *True Lies* and *The Pelican Brief*. He has ballroom danced, played the good guy, and generally done what his fellow film extras are paid to do: just stand there in the background making crowd scenes look crowded.

"Well, we shot a scene for *True Lies* in Rhode Island at one of the Newport mansions," he recalled chuckling. "If you watch closely and know my elbow, you can't miss me!"

How does a quiet guy born and raised in tiny rural Newport, Arkansas find himself brushing that elbow with such A-list celebrities?

It took more than just his Southern charm and beaming smile.

One of Skyrme's three daughters has a job in Washington, DC casting extras in film productions. So whenever he and Sandra - his wife of 35 years - visit the nation's capital, the home videos of their exploits are often shot by a film crew rather than a camcorder.

"It's fun to meet the celebrities. Some are just really down-to-earth, nice

people," he said.

"But it is the most boring thing in the world, sitting around for



Bill Skyrme

hours." In one film, Skyrme posed as a policeman, guarding the White House. The shoot took over 12 hours, so to make the waiting more interesting, he and his fellow "officers" took to passing the time in some often mischievous ways.

"Tourists kept coming up to us asking for directions, thinking we were real cops, so we really started having some fun," he said. (In the film, that 12-hour shoot was edited down to a mere 67 seconds onscreen.)

His car has appeared in even more films than he has. His wife has done so much work as an extra she had to join the Screen Actors' Guild.

While he says he enjoys dabbling in the glamour of it all, his true love is golf. Skyrme has hit the links with the same foursome every week for the past 12 years.

Asked his handicap, he answered dismissively "we play 'fun' golf."

He admitted that he and his partners "bet on absolutely every-

thing," but says money never changes hands - it all goes into a kitty that they empty each year for a trip to golf meccas like Myrtle Beach. "And there, we start the next kitty," he said.

Skyrme came to DAS just three years ago. He lived in Arkansas until 1968, leaving only to work on his uncle's farm each summer in Michigan and then to go to college at the University of Central Arkansas, where he studied math and physics.

That was the year he came to Connecticut, when Timex transferred him to their Middlebury office. Today, he makes his home in Watertown.

He said he's always been fascinated by computers because

## Up Close

"the field is always changing, it never gets boring." Having always kept on top of new computing trends, he gravitated toward Internet and web-related work rather easily.

"Computers are fun," he said without a hint of sarcasm in his voice, "and I like to work." Skyrme said he enjoys what he does at DAS and likes the people he gets to do it with.

That's pretty heavy praise coming from a guy who has punched the clock with Julia Roberts.

# Understanding sexual harassment

By John McKay

Where is the line between innocent flirting and casual compliments with a little innuendo?

This month, Attorney Andrea Keilty from the Business Advisory Group began training managers and supervisors on the laws and agency responsibilities concerning sexual harassment in the workplace.

“It’s a very gray area of the law,” said Keilty.

“Definitions can be interpreted a number of ways, and every case should be looked at on a case-by-case basis.”

Keilty previously worked as an employment attorney in a law firm, representing employers on various legal issues including sexual harassment.



BAG’s Andrea Keilty conducts training

Keilty’s training covers a number of topics including: the harm caused to both the victim and the agency, the loss of productivity, an in-depth look at the definition of sexual harassment,

what behaviors are illegal, and the responsibilities of supervisors and managers to prevent and respond to sexual harassment.

Keilty uses a number of scenarios to illustrate what does and does not constitute sexual harassment.

“This segment of the training usually generates a lot of questions and informal discussion from the participants,” she said, “and it’s exciting to hear different viewpoints. However in the end, it’s important that everyone understand this is a serious subject.”

She said that the participants were extremely receptive to the training and were asking thoughtful questions.

One participant said, “This could have been a very dry training session, but Andrea really made it interesting. That’s important if you want to hold an audience’s attention and get your message through.”

## Think *ability* Connecticut’s EmployABILITY Program

By John McKay

“We have a large untapped pool of candidates that we’re trying to market,” said Disability Specialist Suzanne Liquerman.

She’s right. DAS, in concert with the EmployABILITY Advisory Committee, is doing something about it.

In this booming economy where the phrase “anyone who wants a job can have one” is thrown around like a job application, many

dedicated individuals are working to ensure that it is true for everyone.

“The disabled population in Connecticut consists of people looking for employment in all areas with varying abilities and education,” said Liquerman.

“Unfortunately, there are a number of stereotypes and hurdles already in their way.”

But with DAS’ help, this will become a thing of the past.

DAS Commissioner Barbara Waters has formed the CT EmployABILITY Advisory Committee.

“The committee has met since May and has identified some very progressive goals for Connecticut,” said Waters. They include: increasing employment for people with disabilities in state service, implementing an

accommodation program, improving agency knowledge and awareness about the abilities of people with disabilities, and encouraging the employment of people with disabilities by state contractors.

Based on legislation passed in 1998, PA 98-205, EmployABILITY’s purpose is to promote appropriate and effective training and employment programs for people with disabilities, and encourage vendors to do the same.

EmployABILITY also is an inter-agency effort, a first for the state. Some agencies included are BESB, DAS, DMR, DMHAS, and DOL.

These agencies are targeting qualified individuals, with the idea of collaborating with each other to place people with disabilities in state service.

“When we say an equal opportunity employer, we mean it,” said Liquerman.



By John McKay

**Tony Ferreira, Yvonne Groves** and **Deborah Lewis** of the Food Distribution Program joined Frank Harris, Norwalk Food Service Director, for his annual November turkey day celebration.

In early November, **Meg Yetishefsky** and **Michael Clark** met with the Women's Business Development Center in Stamford, a group that helps women-owned enterprises expand their market to corporate and government buyers.

Also in November, **Carlos Velez** and **Joann McAllister** were in New London for the US Naval Sub-Base Contractors Day. They demonstrated procurement opportunities on the DAS website.

It's been coast to coast for Procurement's **Jim "Jet Lag" Passier**. He and **John Pacholski** attended the National Electronic Commerce Coordinating Council Conference in San Diego on November 10, then spoke before the Public Purchasing Association in Meriden just seven days later.

**Carlos Velez** spoke on the state's contracting opportunities to a group of SBE's and MBE's on January 21 at the Connecticut Construction Development Center in Newington.

**Meg Yetishefsky** and **Michael Clark** met with the Chief Procurement Officers for Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation on January 27 to facilitate their "supplier diversity" initiatives. On February 1, they traveled to Milford to speak to the Network of Women Executives on expanding their markets to government buyers.

**Jim Passier, Carlos Velez, Meg Yetishefsky, and Michael Clark** met with the Executive Committee of the New London Development Corporation on February 8 to provide technical assistance on planning and implementing Set-Aside goals and contracting guidelines.

On February 9, **Carlos Velez** spoke to the Greater New Haven Business and Professional Association on the benefits of being certified with Business CONNECTIONS.

**Doris Vieira** of the Food Distribution Program will attend the American School Food Service Association 28th Annual Legislative Conference in March in Washington, DC.

**Bernie Blumenthal** and **Dan Donahue** attend the monthly meet-

ings of the Connecticut Chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. As the administrator of the Master Insurance Program, DAS holds a prominent role in the organization. On January 27, they also attended the annual meeting of the Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Association, a division of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities. The two also visit two to three local housing authorities every month.

For the past month, **John Wilkerson** has been working on site with the Department of Labor on their "Lean Government" initiative.

Recently **Mike Felix** of FSC Business Office attended the Connecticut Society of Governmental Accountants 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Seminar in New Britain.

## DAS hosts SBE's By Heather Cavanaugh

Opportunities abounded at the recent Small Business Expo held at the Legislative Office Building (LOB).

Vendors from across the state met with Procurement Services and Business CONNECTIONS staff to find out more about programs and services.

"We were glad to see that vendors who have already signed on to do business with the state were interested to find out more about how we can work with them," said Business CONNECTIONS Manager Carlos Velez.

Vendors came to the LOB to attend training sessions in e-commerce, Internet, Getting Wired, and Procurement Tips. Two rooms were set up exclusively for vendors to meet with the procurement teams that they work



Vendors mingle at Small Business Expo.

so closely with throughout the year.

"Our staff worked together to make these folks feel welcome and provide information about anything they might

need to make doing business with the state easier," said Procurement Services Manager Jim Passier.

At the end of the day, vendors mingled at a reception held in their honor at the State Capitol. Deputy Commissioner Alan Mazzola welcomed guests and spoke about DAS' role in helping small businesses.

"We're here to reach out to small businesses and help them to succeed. And we will always try to provide them the tools to do so," said Mazzola.

# All the news that fits, we print

By Mike Mansfield and John McKay



## HR Learning Center

The HR Learning Center will host an open house on Thursday, March 9 at the Keeney Memorial Cultural Center in Wethersfield. “We’re really excited about showing HR professionals what we have to offer,” said Janis Nome. The curriculum includes sexual harassment prevention training, workplace violence prevention, Federal and Medical Leave Act training and more.

Come to the Keeney Memorial Cultural Center between 9:00 a.m. and noon to learn more, or contact Andrea Keilty at (860) 713-5100 for more information.



## Employee Recognition Committee 2000

Members of the 2000 DAS Employee Recognition Program Committee have officially been announced. In keeping with the program’s intent of ensuring equitable representation across all business centers, the group has added new members Pamela Anderson, Gale Bienvenue, Mark Carroza, Dave Elwell, Mike Owsianko, and Cheryl Sawina, who has taken over for Steve Soklow as chairperson.

Returning for their second and final years on the committee are Larry Gore, Nancy Jones, and Mike Mansfield.

The group is at work planning a late March kickoff

for the spring round of awards, which will be given out at a special ceremony in May. Committee members said they are honor bound not to divulge information about the theme of this campaign, but said they expect to hit another home run with this round.

## Uniformity

Who are the men of Property Management? How will you know them when you see them?

Trust us, you’ll know.



**The Property Management Team in sartorial splendor sport their new look.**

Like many other organizations, Property Management thought having a uniform look would add a level of professionalism and ready recognition. The team has coordinated a look that will instantly identify them as property management personnel.

“We have our guys running all over the state with deliveries and a million other things,” said Dan Donahue.

“We’re always being stopped and asked for identification or who we work for, with these jackets and shirts, people will know we’re here from DAS and we mean business,” he added.

Kudos to the team! Fred Ondevilla initiated the idea, and Peter Varhol worked with the vendor and designed the logo - the words “DAS Property

Management” surrounded by an outline of Connecticut.

